

# BLUES IN THE SOUTH

JULY 2011

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**BiTS**  
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## NEW FESTIVAL ANNOUNCED

Promoter of the annual Ashburton Blues Festival, Michael Cranmer, has announced a new venture -The Torquay Blues Festival - to be held on November 4th, 5th and 6th, 2011. Inclusive Weekend Tickets went on sale recently at a knockdown price of £165.

"For that you get entry to the Festival and half-board accommodation at the 3 star Rainbow International Hotel, Belgrave Road, Torquay", said Michael. "All the gigs are in the 400 capacity Club Rainbow within the hotel. It has comfortable tiered seating, dance floor, two bars, and an excellent stage and a great atmosphere. I'll also be offering VIP reserved seating with a close and uninterrupted view of the stage"

The top-class music package features no fewer than eight nominees in the upcoming British Blues Awards. Lined-up already; Todd Sharpville (top far right) Ian Siegal (bottom right), Big Joe Louis and his Blues Kings, Ben Waters, The Hamsters, Will 'Harmonica' Wilde, Mike Whellans (top near right), Catfish Keith, The Untouchables, Baddest Blues Band,

and Son of Dave. There will be workshops, and two late night jam sessions.

The hotel has a carvery, private parking, luxury indoor pool, and multi-gym, and is only a short walk to the sea-front, so partners who want a break from the



music have plenty to do.

For those wanting to stay an extra night on the Sunday, a special rate of £30 double occupancy, or £20 single applies

"What better way to cheer yourself up in the depth of winter than an all-in weekend at a comfortable hotel on the English Riviera with some of the best Blues musicians in the UK playing for you?" Michael told BiTS, "Go on, treat yourself!"

Details and tickets:

[www.torquaybluesfestival.com](http://www.torquaybluesfestival.com) 07855 307 556



### ESSENTIALS - All the stuff you need to know (see also p3 only on the BiTS web

The year 2011 marks the 100th birthday of Mississippi Delta bluesman Robert Johnson who, according to legend, sold his soul down at the crossroads in a midnight bargain and changed music forever. There is a mass of 'celebratory' items that are available to commemorate Rjs Birthday. One example is this: from Dogfish Head Breweries in Delaware, USA. The Text is below their copy.



*Working again with our friends at Sony Legacy (yup, the same folks we did our Miles Davis-inspired Bitches Brew with), Dogfish Head pays tribute to this blues legend by gettin the hellhounds off his trail and into this finely-crafted ale.*

*Hellhound is a super-hoppy ale that hits 100 IBUs in the brewhouse, 10.0 ABV, 10.0 SRM in color, and dry-hopped with 100% centennial hops at a rate of 100 kilos per 100 barrel brew-length. Can you tell we at Dogfish are stoked for this mighty musical centennial? To accentuate and magnify the citrusy notes of the centennial hops (and as a shout out to Robert Johnson's mentor Blind Lemon Jefferson) we add dried lemon peel and flesh to the whirlpool." Oo-er*

#### MORE IDEAS TO CELEBRATE RJ'S BIRTHDAY

Bob Mates: better known as Bluesbob, came up with these marketing ideas.

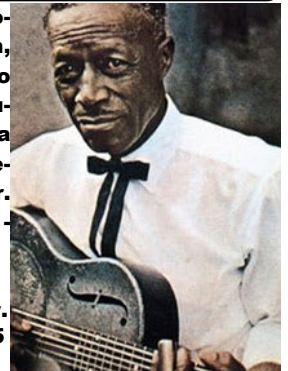
1. The Robert Johnson "bobble-head" doll, talking and non-talking models.
2. Limited edition copies of the transaction between Robert Johnson and the devil, each copy numbered, and with a certificate of authenticity.
3. The "Write RJ's 30th song" contest, wherein you, too, can become a star, by writing what you think would have been his 30th song. It must be in his style, and played on an acoustic instrument. The winner gets to appear on The X Factor.
4. The Robert Johnson whiskey bottle. It's a replica of the one he drank from, complete with a broken seal. Of course, it's empty, for safety reasons.
5. Booths, wherein you can get a picture made of yourself, standing beside Robert Johnson. On the back, it will say "To my friend \_\_\_\_ (your name).
6. Your own piece of ground from "The Crossroads".

Bob says: " These are just a few of the possibilities. If you don't like these ideas, please don't call me. Unfortunately, I can't talk, because my tongue seems to be stuck in my cheek."

#### NEW BOOK ANNOUNCED (GENUINE!)

**PREACHIN' THE BLUES - THE LIFE AND TIMES OF SON HOUSE by Daniel Beaumont**  
**As a young Baptist preacher Eddie "Son" House scorned sinful music until one night in 1927 when the haunting sound of a bottleneck guitar changed his life. House began singing and playing guitar and within a few short years he was a blues legend. This full-length biography traces a life and career marked not only by musical greatness**

but also by violence, alcoholism, two marriages, two decades in obscurity, and finally a surprising comeback. Hardcover. 224 pp. 581-6.....\$24.95  
[Biography]  
<http://www.elderly.com/books/items/581-6.htm>



#### CHECK YOUR BiTS REGULARLY

The  
**BiTS WEB SITE**  
IS AT  
[www.bluesinthesouth.com](http://www.bluesinthesouth.com)

There you will find, reviews, gigs, music, venues and much, much more including our own PAGE 3

There's so much happening these days that BiTS also now has a blog at

<http://newsbluesinthesouth.blogspot.com/>

Finally, don't forget that you can sign up for an email delivery of BiTS as a pdf file by going to the download section and completing the form you will find there.

## P-A-U-L - "Tales from the Gravel"

"Blues rock that's a crossbreed of deep-seeded grooves, lightning riffs and soulful melodies". Thus reads the introduction on the band's website. The music is from one Paul Andrew Ulysses Lamb and his band, not to be confused with Paul Lamb and his King-snakes. The Independent newspaper once said "the big heavy blues of P-A-U-L could fill a container ship" which is a fair comment judging by the evidence on 'Tales from the Gravel'. Paul's deep throated singing ('whisky soaked' said the Classic Rock Society) and the muscular musical approach will be an acquired taste for some at first but, once your ears settle into the sheer power of the music, you begin to appreciate the melodic insistency within and the versatility of the musicians delivering it. Titles like 'Pistol Whipped Again' and 'Ghost of Gun and Fist' show you this is not a band to be ignored! Indeed, their upward spiral has propelled them to a support slot with the great Walter Trout and his band! There is also a guest appearance from Joanne Shaw Taylor (neat solo) on the 6½ minute long touching blues soul of 'We Believe', a quiet interlude led by piano (similarities to 'Let It Be') with bassist Joey Spina and drummer Layla Hall (and others) on backing vocals. Normal service is of course resumed on the Zep like riffing of 'Preachin' Fire' and, on it goes, with fiery hard blues rock that really sets the pulse racing with a touch of Prince funk on songs like 'Bite You'. The final track 'Drinks Are On Me' features some slide guitar and is definitely within 'Blues in the South' territory.

Contact [www.p-a-u-lmusic.com](http://www.p-a-u-lmusic.com)

Phil Jackson

## BILL STEWART - "On Top of the World"

One man and his guitar it's amazing what can be achieved! Falling in a great tradition followed by the likes of Bert Jansch and John Renbourn, although it has to be said that Bill perhaps has a bit more of the blues, 'On Top of the World' wisely treads a course between originals and covers, between songs and instrumentals and does so with depth and subtlety. Bill's own songs really come from the heart- for example 'Who Do You Think You Are?' written in anger after a visit to the Beamish pit and '10,000 Men' about the decline of the shipbuilding industry on Tyneside, a true protest singer! He picks a mean guitar as well and plays some nice slide on 'Sittin' On Top of the World'. Bill bravely attempts two other standards 'Rollin' & Tumblin', Rory Gallagher style- 'I could have had religion!' and 'Crossroads', an intense, high tempo reading. Mark Knopfler is also an influence and he covers 'Your Own Sweet Way'. The CD is consistently good right until the last note with harmonica introductions to the heartfelt 'Northumberland' and a stirring cover of Ira and Charlie Louvin's 'Weapon of Prayer' rounding off a most enjoyable set. 'On Top of the World' is great country blues with a bit of Billy Bragg about it, highly recommended!

(RGF Records)

Phil Jackson

## HOKIE JOINT - "The Music Starts To Play"

If raw, bordering on grungy blues is your bag then 'The Music Starts To Play' is essential. Taking us through a plethora of dirty and difficult subjects: addiction, mortality and 'Watch What You Eat' (the song title is self explanatory), Hokie Joint really does live up to its tag of 'their own unique brand of dirty, roots based groove music'. This band does not tickle your comfort zones but you will be tapping your feet and maybe even singing along to tracks like 'Watch What You Eat' with its stop/start reggae rhythm. There are two lead instruments, guitar and harmonica (Joel Fisk and Giles King) giving the music a hard, guttural edge abetted by some throaty vocals from Jo-Jo Burgess. Also, some fascinating characters emerge in carefully crafted songs like the country folk tinged 'Remington (listen to the 'Girl can't help it' quote on harmonica) and 'Jackie Boy', one of those tunes you wish had gone on longer especially the instrumental groove. And yes there is slide guitar on the show stopping final number 'Bang Bang'- great vocal performance and the guitar, 'harp' and rhythm also pull out all the stops in this one. Terrific stuff and highly recommended!

(Cool Buzz) (Contact: [www.hokiejoint.co.uk](http://www.hokiejoint.co.uk))

Phil Jackson

## BLUES GIGS: FROM EXMOUTH TO EASTBOURNE AND A BIT MORE BESIDES - JULY 2011

01 PETE HARRIS AND HUGH BUDDEN @ THE FO'C'S'LE FOLK CLUB, THE RICHMOND INN, 108 PORTSWOOD RD, SOUTHAMPTON SO17 2FW  
 01 THE PRODUCERS + STOMPIN' DAVE ALLEN @ MR KYPS, PARR ST, POOLE, DORSET. BH14 0JY  
 02 GEOFF EVERETT BAND @ HIGHWAY HUNTERS, DISS, NORFOLK  
 02 JON WALSH BLUES BAND @ THE SWAN, WOOLSTON, SOUTHAMPTON  
 02 RIVERSIDE BLUES BAND @ THE WATERFRONT, SHAMROCK QUAY, SOUTHAMPTON SO14 5QL  
 02 PETE HARRIS AND HUGH BUDDEN @ THE TOLLHOUSE INN, SOUTHAMPTON RD. LYMINGTON  
 03 DAN SOWERBY (SOLO ACOUSTIC) @ ASHLEY WOOD FESTIVAL, NEAR TISBURY  
 03 LIL' MIFFY & THE JT305 ON THE FRONT PART OF THE HAMBLE WEEK W RAY DRURY  
 03 BLUES JAM @ THE STAR INN, BENTWORTH, ALTON, HAMPSHIRE, GU34 5RB  
 04 LIL' MIFFY & THE JT305 ON THE FRONT PART OF THE HAMBLE WEEK W RAY DRURY  
 04 BLUES JAM @ THE FOX, ANDOVER ROAD, NEWFOUND, BASINGSTOKE, HAMPSHIRE, RG23 7HH  
 04 BLUES IS THE TRUTH (9PM-11PM) WITH IAN MCHUGH ON WWW.UKJAZZRADIO.COM  
 04 STAN'S BLUES JAM @ THE TOLLHOUSE INN, LYMINGTON SO41 9HA  
 06 PETE HARRIS AND HUGH BUDDEN @ THE THOMAS TRIPP, WICK LANE, CHRISTCHURCH  
 06 BLUES ON PHONIC FM WITH JULIAN PIPER (6-8 PM WWW.PHONIC.FM)  
 06 12 BAR BLUES JAM @ SALISBURY RUGBY CLUB, SALISBURY SP1 3SA  
 07 HARRIS AND SON (PETE AND ANDY HARRIS) @ THE BENT BRIEF, LODGE RD, SOUTHAMPTON  
 08 GEOFF EVERETT BAND @ THE PARK INN HOTEL, DOVER, KENT  
 08 THE PRODUCERS + STOMPIN' DAVE ALLEN, @ MR KYPS, PARR ST, POOLE, DORSET. BH14 0JY

09 THE GEOFF EVERETT BAND @ THE EIGHT BELLS, HAWKHURST, KENT  
 09 PETE HARRIS AND HUGH BUDDEN @ PRIDDY FOLK FESTIVAL, SOMERSET (AFTERNOON CONCERT)  
 09 THE PRODUCERS @ 'MUSIC IN THE PARK, ESSEX CLOSE, CHARD RUGBY CLUB, CHARD, SOMERSET.  
 09 SIDEWINDER AT FORMULA 1 BRITISH GRAND PRIX, SILVERSTONE  
 10 JON WALSH (ACOUSTIC & SLIDE BLUES) @ LOCK, STOCK & BARREL, NEWBURY  
 10 BLUES JAM @ THE STAR INN, BENTWORTH, ALTON, HAMPSHIRE, GU34 5RB  
 11 BLUES IS THE TRUTH (9PM-11PM) WITH IAN MCHUGH ON WWW.UKJAZZRADIO.COM  
 11 BLUES AT THE BRIDGE @ THE BRIDGE INN, TOPSHAM, DEVON. OPEN MIC/JAM. ALL WELCOME  
 11 BLUES JAM @ THE KING CHARLES IN KINGS WORTHY NEAR WINCHESTER  
 11 ACOUSTIC BLUES JAM @ QUDOS, SALISBURY SP1 1BN  
 11 STAN'S BLUES JAM @ THE SLOOP, PARKSTONE, POOLE, DORSET BH14 0HU  
 13 BLUES ON PHONIC FM 6PM-8PM WITH IAN MCKENZIE (6-8 PM WWW.PHONIC.FM)  
 15 THE PRODUCERS @ CHAPEL ARTS CENTRE, LOWER BOROUGH WALLS, BATH, AVON. BA1 1QR  
 15 PETE HARRIS BLUES BAND @ THE PLATFORM TAVERN, TOWN QUAY, SOUTHAMPTON  
 15 STEAMER @ THE MAYFLOWER, BATH RD, LYMINGTON SO41 3QD  
 16 STOMPIN' DAVES ELECTRIC BAND (WITH DAVE SAUNDERS) @ MARINE THEATRE, LYME REGIS, DORSET. DT7 3QA  
 16 RIVERSIDE BLUES BAND @ THE CHEQUERS, LYMINGTON SO41 8AH  
 17 BLUES JAM @ THE STAR INN, BENTWORTH, ALTON, HAMPSHIRE, GU34 5RB  
 17 THE SHOE BLUES JAM @ THE SHOE INN, PLAITFORD, SO51 6EE

18 BLUES IS THE TRUTH (9PM-11PM) WITH IAN MCHUGH ON WWW.UKJAZZRADIO.COM  
 20 BLUES ON PHONIC FM WITH JULIAN PIPER (6-8 PM WWW.PHONIC.FM)  
 21 EUGENE 'HIDEAWAY' BRIDGES @ OTTERTON MILL, OTTERTON, DEVON  
 22 LARRY MILLER BAND @ THE BARN, SQUARE & COMPASS, WINDMILL HILL, NR ILMINSTER, SOMERSET.  
 23 RIVERSIDE BLUES BAND @ THE THATCHED HOUSE, EAST HOWE LANE, BOURNEMOUTH BH10 5JF  
 23 PETE HARRIS BLUES BAND @ THE WHEATSHEAF, BOTLEY RD, SHEDFIELD NR. WICKHAM, HANTS.  
 23 STOMPIN' DAVE ALLEN + DAVE SAUNDERS @ EALING BLUES & ROOTS FESTIVAL, WALPOLE PARK, LONDON. W5  
 23 JON WALSH @ SALISBURY ARTS CENTRE, SALISBURY.  
 24 BLUES JAM @ THE STAR INN, BENTWORTH, ALTON, HAMPSHIRE, GU34 5RB  
 25 BLUES IS THE TRUTH (9PM-11PM) WITH IAN MCHUGH ON WWW.UKJAZZRADIO.COM  
 26 ACOUSTIC BLUES JAM @ QUDOS, SALISBURY SP1 1BN  
 26 BLUES JAM @ PLATFORM TAVERN, SOTON  
 27 BLUES ON PHONIC FM 6PM-8PM WITH IAN MCKENZIE (6-8 PM WWW.PHONIC.FM)  
 27 STAN'S BLUES JAM @ THE AVON CAUSEWAY, HURN, NR CHRISTCHURCH BH23 6AS  
 29 GEOFF EVERETT BAND - THE YPRES CASTLE INN, RYE, EAST SUSSEX  
 29 RIVERSIDE BLUES BAND @ THE AMBERWOOD, WALKFORD, NEW MILTON  
 29 BLUES JAM @ FARMERS UNION, 16-18 QUEENS TERRACE, QUEEN STREET, EXETER EX4 4HR  
 30 RIVERSIDE BLUES BAND @ THE VIRGINIA ASH, HENSTRIDGE, SOMERSET  
 30 JON WALSH BLUES BAND @ GEORGE IV, CHISWICK, LONDON  
 31 BLUES JAM @ THE STAR INN, BENTWORTH, ALTON, HAMPSHIRE, GU34 5RB

Listings are provided as a guide only. Don't forget to check the venue before you leave home to ensure that the gig is still on. The listing here is far from complete so check out [www.bluesinthesouth.com](http://www.bluesinthesouth.com) too as that is updated all the time: LAST DATE FOR AUGUST 2011 gigs is 10th JULY 2011

## THE 44s / Boogie Disease / Rip Cat TS1004

This Los Angeles-based four-piece is firmly in the Los Angeles blues tradition of James Harman, William Clarke and The Red Devils – no frills rocking blues, with tough harmonica sounds, a really rootsy approach, and just the right amount of seediness. Fabulous Thunderbirds guitarist Kid Ramos produced and plays on four tracks, and he certainly sounds like he is enjoying himself, but the focus is squarely on the band – Johnny Main supplies low-down, no-nonsense vocals and guitar work, whilst harpman Tex Nakamura demonstrates his mastery of the Little Walter derived West Coast style. The title tracks is a supercharged rendition of the old Doctor Ross classic, 'Take It Easy' references Magic Sam, 'Blowin' Like Hell' is, of course, a tribute to the late William Clarke, and Willie Love's 'Automatic' is just a joyous, raw, distorted blast from beginning to end! Then again, so is the entire album, for that matter... This is a CD that is definitely recommended to all lovers of the names mentioned above.

[www.The44sBand.com](http://www.The44sBand.com)

Norman Darwen

## Mama Rosin With Hipbone Slim & The Kneetremblers: Louisiana Sun (Voodoo Rhythm VRCD65)

Swiss Cajun-punk meets London's off-the-wall Sir Bald Diddley and crew (surf, rockabilly, rhythm & blues or... whatever) and the results are loud and ill-mannered - oh, and great fun too. The two groups chop and change personnel on this London-recorded 12 track album, and although the results of this culture clash should be chaotic and shambolic, somehow it all hangs together. Wheezing cajun accordion - all right, it's actually a melodeon, Mr. Pedantic - adds a distinct flavour to the rock and roll numbers (if you remember the rough sound of vintage Goldband Records, this is similar), the aristocratic alopecia'd one turns in some lovely John Lee Hooker styled blues guitar on 'Killing Two Birds With One Stone', and romps ferociously through the rockabilly of 'The Cat Never Sleeps'. Surprisingly there

are some almost traditional sounding cajun items (though do note the "almost!"), the title track sounds as though it has come from a recently discovered vintage jukebox in Ville Platte, and on the closing 'Paint The Town Red', the whole caboodle of styles comes together and makes for a lovely finale. Purists will hate this release, but it may even bring a smile to their faces despite their instincts. Everyone else can just party along.

Norman Darwen





### ETTA JAMES IN HOSPITAL (AGAIN):

According to Rev Keith A. Gordon (of Aboutblues.com), "James has been receiving in-home care for Alzheimer's disease and for

leukaemia. Sadly, the 73-year-old singer has taken a turn for the worse, and was hospitalised again recently for a urinary tract infection and for sepsis, a dangerous infection of the blood. This is the same life-threatening problem James fought in early 2010.

### LOUISIANA RED ON YOUTUBE

Go to <http://tinyurl.com/ya454d9> to see Louisiana Red's 1983 Performance on YouTube. This is a classic performance by Red (aka Iverson Minter) performing "Future Blues" in Europe with an all-star band that includes Jimmy Rogers, Carey Bell, Lovie Lee, Queen Sylvia Embry and Charles Otis. This concert was part of the American Folk Blues Festival '83.

### AND>>>>>>ROBERT NIGHTHAWK TOO

Go to [www.youtube.com/watch?v=oypAbJjiEs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oypAbJjiEs) to see film of Mr Nighthawk performing on Maxwell St. circa 1964. The clip comes from the movie 'And This is Free'. Robert sings his song Eli's Place/Murdering Blues. Robert Nighthawk was born Robert Lee McCollum (November 30, 1909 – November 5, 1967[1]) and recorded under the pseudonyms of Robert Lee McCoy as well as Robert Nighthawk.

## A BOOK REVIEW

*We don't have many book reviews in BiTS but here's an exception because it is such and important and outstanding publication:*

**I FEEL SO GOOD: The Life and Times of Big Bill Broonzy. By Bob Reisman Hardcover: 366 pages  
Publisher: University Of Chicago Press (May 15, 2011)**

Big Bill Broonzy was a hugely influential performer who overcame the endemic racism and Jim Crow laws in the southern states at the beginning of the last century, and went on (in Chicago) to found, almost single-handedly, a branch of blues music (small tight groups with guitar, piano, bass, drums, occasional harmonica or trumpet or sax and with front vocal) which spread from its Chicago base across the world. When that genre failed to provide Bill with sufficient income/ stimulation, he reinvented himself as a (mainly) solo performer, selling himself as a son of the soil and as a raconteur who claimed (and commented on) links to slavery and to the grinding poverty of life in Mississippi and Arkansas at the start of the 20th Century.

Bill recorded hundreds of songs, a large number of which he wrote himself. Between 1927 (his first recording) and 1947, he recorded 290 pieces, frequently demonstrating amazing guitar and vocal skills. In the period after 1947, to his death in 1958, Bill delighted audiences with his "I

am a folk singer – the last of the bluesmen" persona, telling tales of life on the farm, in the US army, in the windy city and of love lost and found to say nothing of having fun – something Bill seems to have a penchant for. He often introduced himself by saying "My name is William Lee Conley Broonzy".

Bill regaled audiences with tales of his birth on

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26 June 1893 and that of his twin sister Laney and of his father's response to being told he had twins to care for. He claimed to have served in the US Army in France from 1918 - 1919 and to have been invited by a record company to travel to the Delta following a major flood in 1927: Turns out, that a good deal of this was fiction. Robert Reisman's impeccable research suggests a birth date for Bill of 26<sup>th</sup> June 1903 and that Laney was not a twin at all but four years older than Bill. The reported army experience was Bill's factional description of an amalgam of the stories told by black soldiers returning from overseas. The alleged trip to the Mississippi Delta to see the flooding was similarly untrue, but was a factional account into which Bill inserted himself. It turns out too that Broonzy is not even his real name. He was born into the world with the name Lee Conly (note spelling) Bradley; and so it goes on. Bill Broonzy had a vivid imagination and a way of drawing people into his life that made you convinced he was telling the truth.

Reisman has done a magnificent job here in unpicking the fabric of time and re-arranging the pieces. But it must be understood that this revisionist work in no way affects the contribution made by Broonzy/Bradley to the blues and to music in general. His open manner and his life experience on the farm (he was a skilled plough hand – no doubt about that) and his sharp mind, allowed him to craft the most beautiful, funny and emotional lyrics and to learn to play the guitar in a way which more than 50 years after his death leaves some of us open mouthed with amazement. Reisman's writing style, the depth and breadth of his research and his clear affection for his subject, make this book a must for anyone with more than a passing interest in the blues and in the music of one of the genre's towering figures.

**Ian McKenzie  
(see also [www.broonzy.com](http://www.broonzy.com))**

**QUOTE OF  
THE MONTH**

**"SOUNDS LIKE THE BLUES - ARE COMPOSED  
OF FEELING, FINESSE, AND FEAR."  
-BILLY GIBBONS"**



ZZ Top

Once upon a time there was ONE Blues programme every week on BBC radio and nowt else. Now there are dozens. Julian Piper and Ian McKenzie (Ed of BiTS) have shows on Phonic Fm in Exeter (see ad left). Ian McHugh has a regular Monday night show (9pm-11pm) on [www.ukjazradio.com](http://www.ukjazradio.com) Dave Watkins has a blues radio show on Frome FM (Pronounced Froom) (<http://www.fromefm.co.uk/>) Dave's schedule is more erratic than the weeklies noted above. Dave's next shows are 16 July [during the Frome Festival], 13 August, 10 September, 8 October, 5 November, 3 December, 14 Jan 2012, 11 Feb 2012. So for a diet of up-tempo or slow blues, old classics, country blues, slide guitar blues, jive and much much more check out one or all of the above shows. You will not regret it.

**MUSIC TO EASE YOUR SOUL AND SOOTHE YOUR TROUBLED MIND**

## PAGE 3 REMINDER

Please take a few minutes to vote in the British Blues Awards. Now in its second year, the BBA is still the only national award celebrating the work and commitment of a wide range of British Blues musicians. The nominations all come from people like you (no elitist membership requirements) and the voting is the same. Open 'till 31st July 2011. It is the belief of the BiTS team that the initial development of the BBA and its expansion to include a wider range of categories this year, is a hugely significant enterprise, which must be supported. BiTS sponsors the Male Vocalist of the Year category and we invite you to vote in that and ALL the categories.